

2006 Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Program Guidelines (Rev. 6/06)

The intent of the Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) program, a federally funded initiative under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act, is to help former foster youth complete their education/training goals and make a successful transition to self-sufficiency by providing additional financial support for post-secondary education and training.

A. Eligibility:

Initial:

1. Former foster youth participating in the Department's higher education program aged 18 through 21 years.
2. Former foster youth under 21 years of age, not currently participating in the Department's higher education program, who would have been eligible for the higher education program if they had applied within one year of completion of high school may be eligible for ETV.

Continuing:

1. Maintain a satisfactory level of performance in accordance with school and federal financial aid guidelines and be making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the program. In general, this means a "C" or 2.0 grade point average.
2. Youth participating in the ETV program on their 21st birthday shall remain eligible until age 23, provided they remain enrolled in a full time postsecondary education or training programs; and are making satisfactory progress in their course of study.

B. Definitions:

"Cost of attendance" in accordance with Federal definition, means the total cost for attendance at an institution of higher education, including the cost of: tuition and fees; room, board and clothing; books and supplies, including rental or purchase of equipment, material and supplies, including documented purchase of a personal computer; travel expenses and transportation, including driver's education, insurance, bus passes; required residential training and special study projects; dependent care expenses. Other expenses may be considered, if they are directly related to the "cost of attendance." The cost of purchasing a motor vehicle is **not** an allowable expense.

"Institution of higher education" as defined in Public Law 105-244 means a public or non-profit school accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting association that: awards a bachelor's degree or not less than a two-year program that provides credit towards a degree; or provides not less than one year of training towards gainful employment; or is a vocational program that provides training for gainful employment and has been in existence at least two years. Additionally, the institution admits as regular students only persons with a high school diploma or equivalent, or admits as regular students persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance.

"Independent Living Transition Plan (ILTP)" is a written plan developed by the youth with assistance from an ILP service provider or the DHS social worker that identifies the youth's educational, career and life goals and the plan for how the youth will attain these goals, including the identification of how the youth will obtain the necessary skills, knowledge, services to attain these goals. For the ETV program the ILTP must include a component to ensure the successful completion of post-secondary educational/vocational training. This may include tutoring,

connection with guidance counselors, study groups, or other support systems. In addition, the plan will include: a projected budget for the current year/academic session; a budget for the total cost of the youth's education; and a plan for obtaining continuing funding and support during the youth's participation in higher education.

C. Responsibilities:

1. Youth's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Application for additional sources of funding, including scholarships and grants;
 - b. Completion & filing of the ETV application;
 - c. Provision of documentation required for determination of eligibility and award amount;
 - d. Development of an ILTP;
 - e. Provision of receipts and other documentation for the expenditure of the ETV funds; and
 - f. Compliance with the Department's program requirements.
2. The ILP Provider and/or DHS staff shall:
 - a. Assist youth in the development of the ILTP and completion of the ETV application; and
 - b. Provide continuing support and guidance while youth participates in the ETV program and the Department's higher education program.
3. DHS staff shall determine the eligibility for ETV and amount of award for eligible applicants.
4. Payee's responsibilities include but are not limited to:
 - a. Accepting the funds from the Department and disbursing funds to the youth in accordance with the approved plan for use of funds.
 - b. Obtaining receipts documenting the youth's expenditure of funds.

D. Application Process:

1. Applications may be filed every six (6) months for planned expenses in the upcoming educational/training sessions.
2. Applications are to be submitted to the youth's worker or Child Welfare Services Intake if the youth does not have an assigned worker.
3. Required documentation:
 - a. Letter of acceptance – for new and transfer students;
 - b. Current transcript that includes course credits and grades;
 - c. A written Independent Living Transition Plan (ILTP), which must include an annual budget that includes planned income, e.g., earnings, scholarships, loans, grants, and expenses including daily living and educational costs; and
 - d. Financial aid award letter is required to determine the cost of attendance and total amount of financial aid from all sources prior to the ETV funding.

E. Disposition of Application:

In accordance with section 17-804-6(a) Hawaii Administrative Rules, the disposition of application shall be made no later than thirty calendar days following the date the completed application is received by the Department. The Department shall notify the applicant of the

decision within 15 days following the date the Department makes the disposition on the application.

F. Amount of ETV Award:

ETV awards shall be provided only to the extent that federal funds are available for this purpose.

The usual award shall not exceed \$2,000 per year per youth. ETV awards are issued to assist the student with expenses that are not covered by other sources and should not be requested for expenses that can be covered by existing programs, grants or organizations.

In **exceptional** circumstances the award may exceed \$2,000, but shall not exceed \$5,000.00 per youth per year. Awards over \$2,000 require documentation of youth's extreme need and approval of the CWS Section Administrator.

The amount of the award under this program shall be disregarded for purposes of determining the recipient's eligibility for, or the amount of any other Federal or Federally supported assistance, except that the total amount of educational assistance to a youth under this program and under other Federal and Federally supported programs shall not exceed the total cost of attendance, as defined in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1995.

G. Priority of Applicants:

1. Students, ages 22 and 23, who are no longer eligible for the Department's higher education board allowance program due to age, and who received an ETV when they were 21 years.
2. Students, age 21, participating in the Department's higher education program, or students who would have been eligible to participate in the program if they had applied within one year of completion of high school
3. Students under age 21, participating in the Department's higher education program who have not previously received an ETV;
4. Students under age 21, participating in the Department's higher education program who have previously received an ETV.

H. Appeal/Hearing Process:

A youth who does not agree with the determination of the application has the right to an Administrative Hearing in accordance with chapter 17-602.1 Hawaii Administrative Rules and Departmental procedures.

I. Overpayments:

An overpayment shall occur when the youth receives an ETV benefit to which the youth is not entitled. Overpayments shall be collected directly from the youth, or as an offset against future ETV funds for which the youth may be eligible.